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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION

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1936 Agricultural Conservation Program In Brief—North Central Region.

. Information for farmers in Illinois, Indiana,
Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ne-
braska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

The 1936 agricultural conservation program is designed to carry out provisions of the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act. Its major purpose is to encourage a wiser use of our national soil resources.

Throughout the North Central or Corn Belt States, overcropping and soil erosion have caused a gradual but serious decline in soil fertility and loss of soil itself. Some farmers have made worthy efforts to prevent this agricultural waste. Farmers in general, however, largely because of economic conditions beyond their control, have continued to follow an exploitive kind of farming.

Therefore, direct Federal grants will be made to farmers who this year follow certain farming practices that will restore fertility, such as placing a larger amount of their land in crops that will provide a protective cover to the soil and furnish an abundance of organic matter that may be plowed under. In providing these grants, the Government is offering to share with farmers the expense of conserving the soil and improving the fertility and productiveness of their farms.

The program is being administered locally by county and community committeemen who are farmers elected for this purpose by their neighbors in the community.

NOTE.—This leaflet explains the program procedure for farms on which only the general soil-depleting crops are produced. This includes most farms in the North Central Region. On farms where one or more of the "special" crops—cotton, tobacco, sugar beets, and flax—are grown, the procedure and requirements are somewhat different. Farmers interested in the special crops can get details from their committeemen or from the county agricultural agent.

HOW A FARMER MAY TAKE PART IN PROGRAM

Has Work Sheet Filled Out.

The first step for a farmer to take is to furnish his 1935 crop acreage figures, and other necessary information on the use of land on his farm. This information is listed on work sheets.

Making out the work sheet puts no obligation on the owner or operator of a farm. If he finds out later that he does not or cannot measure up to the standards of the program, no harm has been done. But if a farmer is to become eligible for a grant, a work sheet must be filled out for all land he owns or operates in the county.

The chief purpose of the work sheet is to aid committeemen in establishing a soil-depleting base for the farm. This base is needed to determine (1) a farmer's contribution to soil conservation this year, (2) his eligibility for a grant, and (3) his total payments.

Has Base Established for Farm.

On most farms in the North Central Region, the total soil-depleting base will be the total of all acres in general soil-depleting crops, such as corn, oats, wheat, and barley, harvested on the farm in 1935.

Modifications in this total acreage will be recommended by the community committee to the county committee so as to adjust the base for the following: (1) To include in it the number of "adjusted acres" that were planted to soil-conserving crops under the 1935 corn-hog, wheat, or other A. A. A. contracts; (2) to correct for unusual variations in 1935 plantings resulting from drought, flood, or other unusual weather conditions; and (3) to bring abnormally high or low bases more nearly in line with bases for similar farms in the community.

When the base for each farm in the county has been approved by the State committee, the final figures will be made available to individual farmers.

Has Crops Classified.

In order to establish the base and to check the use of land on the farm this year, crops grown on cropland¹ have been divided into two classes, (1) soil depleting and (2) soil conserving.

The **soil-depleting crops** are field corn; sweet corn; broomcorn; popcorn; small grains harvested for grain or hay, including wheat, oats, barley, rye, buckwheat, flax, rape, emmer, speltz, and grain mixtures; annual grasses pastured or harvested for hay or seed, like sudan and millets; soybeans, field beans, cowpeas, and field peas, harvested for grain or hay; grain sorghums and sweet sorghums; potatoes; melons, strawberries, sweetpotatoes, and other commercial truck and vegetable crops; sugar beets; cotton; tobacco; rice; hemp; and cultivated sunflowers. Land in any of these crops will be considered as used for the production of a soil-depleting crop for the year in which the crop is harvested. Unless reclassified, all cropland that is idle in 1936 also will be counted as soil-depleting.

The **soil-conserving crops** include practically all of the legumes, and the perennial grasses which are grown on cropland.² However, if these crops are to be classed as soil-conserving when they are grown with a nurse crop such as rye, oats, wheat, barley, or grain mixtures, the nurse crop must be clipped green or pastured enough to prevent grain formation. Soybeans, field beans, cowpeas, and field peas are soil-conserving crops if they are not harvested nor pastured but are turned under as a green manure crop. Forest trees are soil-conserving if planted on cropland since January 1, 1934.

Certain acreages of land on the farm are classed as **neutral**; that is, they are not to be included in establishing the base nor considered as soil-conserving, unless otherwise provided. They are (a) mature orchards and vineyards; (b) cultivated fallow land unless otherwise classified; (c) roads, lanes, lots, yards, and other similar noncropland; (d) woodland other than cropland planted to forest trees since January 1, 1934; and (e) idle cropland in 1935 unless it was left idle last year because of unusual weather conditions and is reclassified.

¹By "cropland" is meant all farm land which is tillable and from which at least one crop other than wild hay was harvested between Jan. 1, 1930, and Jan. 1, 1936, and all other farm land devoted to orchards or vineyards which had not reached bearing age by Jan. 1, 1936.

²More specifically, the soil-conserving crops are (a) the perennial grasses: Bluegrass, dallis, timothy, redtop, orchard grass, Bermuda grass, brome grass, crested wheatgrass, slender wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, grama grasses, buffalo grass, canary grass, blue stem grasses, Kueleria, grass mixtures; (b) annual legumes: Vetch, winter peas, crimson clover, annual lespedeza; (c) biennial legumes: Sweet, red, alsike, and mammoth clovers; and (d) perennial legumes: Alfalfa, sericea, and white clover.

Applies for Grant and Has Performance Checked.

The farmer who applies for a soil-conservation grant must show (1) that a work sheet has been filled out for all land owned or operated by him in the county, and (2) the extent to which he has met the conditions for a grant on his farm. If a farm is rented on shares, both owner and operator must apply for grants if both are to receive grants. But an application may be made by the share-tenant alone if the owner does not wish to take part in the program.

Later, when the 1936 cropping practice has been established and the extent of performance can be determined, the individual farm will be checked by local committeemen. Payment will be made as soon as possible after actual evidence of performance has been certified by the local committee.

If a person owns or operates two or more farms in a county, eligibility for a grant will be determined on all his farms in the county in much the same manner as if they were but one farm.

May Receive Two Classes of Payments.

A farmer who performs in line with the standards of the program may qualify for either or both of two classes of payments.

He may qualify for a **class I (soil-conserving) payment** if he shifts some of the acreage in his soil-depleting base to soil-conserving crops this year. The payment will be on a per-acre basis and will vary between farms, between counties, and between States according to the relative productivity of the land. The average rate for the whole country will be about \$10 an acre. The largest number of shifted acres for which a farmer can receive payment, however, is 15 percent of all acres in his base.

TO ILLUSTRATE. If a farmer has a soil-depleting base of 100 acres, he may qualify for a class I payment on any number of acres from 1 to 15 (15 percent of 100 acres, or 15 acres, is his maximum) which he takes out of corn, oats, wheat, or any other general soil-depleting crop and plants to a soil-conserving crop. For example, if he shifts 10 acres to soil-conserving crops in 1936, he will qualify for the class I payment on each of the 10 acres. If the class I payment rate in his county averages \$12 per acre and the productivity of his land is 90 percent of the county average, he will qualify for a class I payment of \$10.80 (90 percent of \$12) times 10 acres, or \$108.

In addition, a farmer may qualify for a **class II (soil-building) payment** which will be made at different rates for new seedings of certain crops and for the adoption of certain approved practices.

Rates had been approved up to April 15 for the following seedings made on cropland between October 1, 1935, and September 30, 1936: Alfalfa and sericea, \$2 an acre; red clover and mammoth clover, \$1.50 an acre; alsike, sweet, and white clovers, and Korean lespedeza, \$1 an acre; and legume mixtures, from \$1 to \$1.50 an acre. Other rates and practices include: Soybeans or cowpeas seeded on cropland on or after October 1, 1935, and plowed under as green manure on or before September 30, 1936, \$1.50 an acre; application on cropland or pasture land of at least 2 tons of limestone per acre between January 1 and September 30, 1936, \$2.50 per acre; planting of forest trees on cropland or pasture land between January 1, 1936, and September 30, 1936, and according to approved standards, \$5 per acre.

There is a limit, however, on the total class II payment a farmer may receive. This limit, which is called his soil-building allowance, is the same number of dollars as there are acres in soil-conserving crops on cropland on his farm in 1936.

TO ILLUSTRATE: A farmer has 25 acres in soil-conserving crops on his farm this year—20 acres of rotation pasture and 5 acres of alfalfa. As his soil-building allowance is \$25, his class II payment cannot be more than \$25. He may earn \$30 for seeding red clover at \$1.50 an acre in his 20-acre field of oats which is to be harvested, but his allowance is the \$25. He cannot include the 20-acre new red clover seeding in figuring his allowance because oats, a soil-depleting crop, has been harvested from the land.

In some cases a class II payment will be made on the same acres that were shifted from soil-depleting crops and for which a class I payment was made.

TO ILLUSTRATE: A farmer may receive a class I payment of \$100, more or less, for shifting 10 acres of his soil-depleting base acreage to soil-conserving crops. If the entire shift was made to alfalfa, for example, he would be eligible for a class II payment of \$2 an acre for new alfalfa seedings, or \$20, in addition to his class I payment.

Both class I and class II payments between owner and tenant will be divided in the same way as the principal soil-depleting crop, or the proceeds from this crop, is divided under the terms of the lease.

Minimum Requirement for Full Payment.

A farmer who applies for a grant will not qualify for all the payments that otherwise may be due him unless he has an acreage in soil-conserving crops in 1936 which is not less than 15 percent of the number of acres in his soil-depleting base.

This 15-percent minimum requirement should not be confused with the 15-percent maximum, which is the largest number of acres in the base on which a farmer can divert and receive a class I payment.

TO ILLUSTRATE: A farmer had 100 acres of soil-depleting crops and only 13 acres of alfalfa in 1935. A soil-depleting base of 100 acres was established for the farm. This farmer must have in 1936 at least 15 acres (15 percent of 100 acres, the minimum) of soil-conserving crops on his farm if he is to receive all payments to which he otherwise may be entitled. He may meet the minimum by keeping his alfalfa acreage and diverting 2 acres from his soil-depleting base to the production of a soil-conserving crop. Under these circumstances he would be eligible to receive a class I payment on 2 acres in addition to any class II payment which he may be eligible to receive. If the farmer so desires, he might divert 15 acres from his soil-depleting base to the production of soil-conserving crops instead of 2 acres. Fifteen acres (15 percent of 100 acres) is the maximum amount for which a class I payment can be made. In such case he would have 85 acres in soil-depleting crops and 28 acres in soil-conserving crops in 1936.

Deductions May Be Made.

If a farmer fails to meet the minimum acreage of soil-conserving crops on his farm this year, a deduction of one and one-half times his farm's class I payment rate may be made from any payment otherwise due him.

A deduction also may be made if the acreage of all soil-depleting crops on the farm in 1936 is larger than the base. For each acre in excess a deduction at the general class I payment rate for the farm will be made from any payment that otherwise may be due.

TO ILLUSTRATE: If a farmer fails to meet the minimum acreage of soil-conserving crops by 5 acres, and the class I payment for his farm is \$10 an acre, he will be subject to a deduction of \$75 (1½ times \$10, or \$15, multiplied by the 5 acres). If his payments that otherwise would be made total \$75 or less, he will be declared ineligible for a grant, and therefore will not be subject to any deduction. On the other hand, if a farmer whose class I payment is \$10 an acre overplants his soil-depleting base by 5 acres, he will be subject to a deduction of \$50 (\$10 times the 5 acres)—if his payments that otherwise would be made total \$50 or more.